



Honoring government workers.

Each year since 1985, the U.S. Congress designates the first week of May as [Public Service Recognition Week](#) – time set aside to honor public employees and to educate the public about the many ways government workers make life better for all Americans. It provides an excellent opportunity to recognize state employees and express appreciation for one another in our commitment to serve the people of Colorado.

To celebrate the important contributions of our State employees, the Governor's Office and the Department of Personnel & Administration (DPA) asked each State agency to select one employee who most exemplifies the significant and invaluable contributions public servants make to the quality of life in our State. These honorees were selected for regularly demonstrating efficient, effective and elegant service to the people of Colorado.

Congratulations and thank you to the following 2014 Public Service Recognition Week honorees:

Colorado Energy Office – Nate Watters, Digital Communications Manager

Nate is an extraordinary member of the Energy Office team. From day one, he has consistently demonstrated his ability to manage a successful communications strategy, stay current with messaging, and manage the Energy Office intern program. His quality of work is outstanding and his professionalism is exceptional. While Nate is also managing three websites and a robust social media program, he has recently been tasked with the additional responsibility of Acting-Public Information Officer. There is no question that he will do an outstanding job. That is why we are proud to be able to recognize Nate with this award.

Department of Agriculture – Steve Merritt, Chemist

Steve provides analytical service to the Department's Groundwater program, as well as CDPHE's Surface Water Program. Steve performed a demanding workload that included analyzing nearly 360 samples totaling approximately 30,240 determinations. The work was completed on time or early which was substantially beyond performance expectations given this increased workload. This level of productivity fosters elegance and demonstrates the lab's ability to perform in a high volume environment. Steve took the initiative and played a key role in process improvement for method development and validation for glyphosate (*GLIE-foe-sate*) in surface and ground water. He has substantially improved the efficiency and effectiveness of the laboratories instrumentation in terms of throughput and data processing. Steve's tenacity and development as a talented pesticide chemist helps the laboratory maintain and promote our participation in multiple analytical programs. Steve also continues to mentor other staff developing their analytical skills and capabilities.

Department of Corrections – Colin Carson, Criminal Investigator II

Colin Carson is an exemplary Criminal Investigator for the DOC. The Victim Services Unit routinely receives information from victims being contacted, harassed or intimidated by offenders in the custody of DOC. Many of these victims have protection orders and are terribly afraid. Colin displays the utmost professionalism and respect when dealing with victims and staff. Mr. Carson goes above and beyond for each and every victim case he is asked to handle. He recently made a personal visit to the home of an 82-year-old man who was being financially and emotionally exploited by two female offenders. The family sent DOC a letter of appreciation as he brought invaluable relief by preventing physical and financial harm, and further victimization of their father while also stopping one of the offenders from paroling into his home. Mr. Carson has taken on, investigated and resolved more than 20 work-intensive victim-related cases in the past few months; several of which resulting in charges being presented to District Attorneys. His efforts have contributed greatly to the mission of DOC Victim Services while simultaneously demonstrating superior service to the people of Colorado.

Department of Education – Dr. John Penn, Executive Director of Field Services

Dr. Penn has served the department since August 27, 2001. Since that time, he has put countless miles on his car, traveling the state to provide on-site technical assistance and support to superintendents and principals across the state. He epitomizes customer service, making himself available 24-7 to meet the needs of schools and districts. This dedication to the state's schools and districts was best exemplified during the floods that impacted close to 30 districts in the state and displaced thousands of students and educators. Immediately following the floods, he made personal contacts with the impacted districts, connected them with resources, worked to streamline services and provided support to them. He served as a key point of contact between the impacted districts and the state, working to minimize confusion and increase support. The department commends his dedication to districts, schools, and students.

Department of Health Care Policy & Financing – See Thao, Client Eligibility and Enrollment Liaison

See has been nominated by the department for her extraordinary customer service during Colorado's historic Medicaid expansion and health care reform roll-out. See worked on the most difficult and complex eligibility and enrollment client cases. She continuously received compliments from clients, colleagues, and HCPF partners about her outstanding efforts to assist Coloradans during the enrollment process. We feel that See truly represents the ideals the department strives for each day at HCPF – going above and beyond on behalf of Colorado citizens who are most in need.

Department of Higher Education (History Colorado) – JJ Rutherford, History Colorado Education Director

Though online learning represents an efficient, elegant and effective way to reach even Colorado's most remote classrooms, finding the resources to develop and deliver these programs is not easy. In response to the Governor's desire to expand the teaching of Colorado history in K-12 classrooms, History Colorado Education Director JJ Rutherford initiated a partnership with the CU Boulder Center for the

American West, convened an educators' advisory board, and secured a \$134,000 grant from the Institute for Museum and Library Services to create digital learning environments and attendant badging programs. These online Colorado history programs that include a gaming component are designed to engage students at multiple grade levels throughout the state and to meet state curriculum standards.

IMLS recently invited JJ to present this work at the national Web Wise conference in Washington, D.C., bringing national attention to this innovative program and the work of Colorado government.

Department of Human Services – Stacy Evans, Supervisor of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation's Northglenn Office

Stacy Evans, a Division of Vocational Rehabilitation supervisor in Northglenn, helps people imagine and achieve successes they did not know were possible. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has had a difficult year, with an intense audit and financial challenges that resulted in the wait-listing of its customers. With new managers, DVR is making significant changes to its business processes to serve customers better. As with any overhaul in business operations, these changes are difficult and require staff take new approaches to their work. Stacy has fully embraced these changes, and she and her team are showing real results. The Northglenn office was the first to complete an in-depth case review to find and correct any problem with DVR cases. Through Stacy's leadership, Northglenn has improved its ability to determine clients' eligibility faster, and it has achieved a 100% contact rate with customers each month. Stacy is helping to ensure that the new efficiencies in practice, along with an elegant engagement with staff and customers produces effective outcomes and helps individuals with disabilities achieve their employment goals. She inspires customers and colleagues to envision and realize a better life.

Department of Labor & Employment – Andrea Rodriguez, Unemployment Insurance Claimant Services Processing Adjudicator

Andrea Rodriguez was selected as this year's Employee of the Year for her ambitious efforts in streamlining the Unemployment Insurance process. Andrea decreased overpayments and unreported earnings from months (and sometimes years!) to a matter of weeks. Her dedicated efforts also helped her achieve a promotion to an adjudicator in the Claims Processing Unit. It should be noted that her absence in the Extended Benefits Unit was very noticeable - it took 4

employees to cover the work she did so effortlessly by herself! Andrea was nominated by 30 of her colleagues for her efforts and has been dubbed by her peers as the "Ninja of Ledgers".

Department of Local Affairs – Carrie Kronberg, Portfolio Manager

Carrie produced all the documents required for the HUD Disaster Action Plan. She expedited the submission of the Action Plan, resulting in the early approval and implementation of CDBG-DR assistance to local governments, businesses, and households. Without any previous CDBG-DR experience, the submission of her work evoked an uncharacteristic HUD response of "impeccable". This type of reaction builds our credibility and lends to the speedy approval of the Disaster Recovery Action Plan. Carrie also administered the investment of the Colorado Housing Investment Fund. Again with minimal previous experience administering multifamily real estate loan transactions, Carrie was instrumental in closing \$13 million in loans within four months. This led to an additional investment of \$23 million in funding from the Colorado Attorney General. Carrie's performance demonstrates dedication, integrity, and commitment to service.

Department of Military & Veterans Affairs – William Conroy, Director of Division of Veterans Affairs

William (Bill) Conroy has a lifetime of service which significantly advanced the status of veterans throughout the Rocky Mountain region. Bill started his career in January 1975 with the Disabled Veterans of America (DAV) in Denver. He helped develop the National DAV Training Academy based in Denver. He completed his career at DAV as the Supervisor of its Denver-based office, which covered Colorado and Wyoming. In 2000, he became the Supervisor of Paralyzed Veterans of America Denver office, which included veterans in Colorado, Utah and Wyoming. In 2007, Bill was selected as the Director of the Colorado Division of Veteran Affairs, where, along with increasing the number of claims three-fold, his steadfast integrity, maturity and sound judgment has earned him the respect and loyalty of those with whom he serves. When he formally retires in July 2014, after

39 ½ years of service, it can be said that Bill has made a significant and indelible contribution by advocating for the needs of all veterans and their families.

Department of Natural Resources – Jim Precup, Colorado Oil & Gas Commission, Northeast Inspection Supervisor

Jim Precup supervises the team responsible for inspecting oil and gas facilities and responding to complaints in the Wattenberg Niobrara oil and gas field, which was devastated by the catastrophic flooding last September. He and his team evaluated the flood's impact on the oil and gas industry and whether damaged equipment had impacted public health, safety, and the environment. Jim efficiently marshaled as many as ten teams daily for weeks at a time as they worked around flooded roads, swollen rivers, and flood debris. Jim's constant presence in the field, where he collected data from the assessment teams and conducted reconnaissance, enabled him to provide immediate and ongoing feedback to command staff in Denver. Through Jim's work, the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission was able to quickly communicate to state leaders that oil and gas facilities had come through the flooding with damaged facilities but only minor impacts to the environment and no impacts on public health or safety. This knowledge allowed the state to channel resources to areas where public welfare was in jeopardy.

Department of Personnel & Administration – Scott Villalva, Capitol Complex Maintenance Manager

On Monday, Jan. 6, at approximately 7:45 a.m., the Colorado State Capitol experienced a fire alarm due to water flow in the attic. Capitol Complex crews, led by Scott, responded to the scene and discovered that a temporary heating system in place during the dome restoration project had failed. The removal of the scrim allowed freezing air to circulate down into the attic, freezing a valve in the sprinkler system. Scott and his crew immediately secured all water lines and painstakingly went to each sprinkler head, removed plugs, heated the frozen water with a hand-held heater, and vacuumed each head out to ensure no water would leak into the House Chambers. This all took place two days before the start of the 2014 legislative session. Scott stayed for 24 hours along with his crew, who were rotating 4-hour shifts throughout the night to continue to thaw pipes and check for additional leaks.

Department of Public Health & Environment – Michael Beck, Grants & Loan Unit Manager in the Water Quality Control Division

Mike is known as the go-to-person for grant and loan funding for water and wastewater infrastructure projects. He is respected by state funding partners and the EPA for superior customer service and professional stewardship of state and federal funds. In 2013, Mike oversaw the award and distribution of \$30 million to municipalities across the state for their water and wastewater infrastructure projects. Mike works with local governments and private consulting engineers to solicit and implement suggestions for streamlining grant and loan rules, application and award processes. This recently occurred during the development of the Nutrient Grant process. His efforts resulted in an efficient and abbreviated process that awarded \$14.7 million to 19 municipal wastewater and sanitation districts throughout Colorado. Mike was the lead for a three agency State Revolving Loan Fund LEAN event that will result in improved transparency and elimination of redundancy for applicants and partner agencies.

Department of Public Safety – Jana Locke, Legislative Liaison

Jana is a trusted and indispensable member of the Executive Director's Office and the Department. Her intelligence, comprehension, and ability to succinctly organize material make her the ideal legislative liaison. If she doesn't already have command of an issue, she quickly educates herself on topics as varied as wildland fire response, building forensic laboratory space, or the Colorado Commission on Crime and Juvenile Justice, as well as the legislative and budgetary processes. We asked her to participate in the Office of State Planning & Budget's Performance Institute, and she has served in a key role in helping the Department move toward more meaningful strategic and operational planning. Jana's capabilities, value and contributions are recognized, not only within the Department, but by members of the Governor's Office, legislators and their staff members. Without reservation, we are pleased for Jana Locke to receive DPS's honor during Public Service Recognition Week.

Department of Regulatory Agencies – Tim Villarosa, Budget Analyst

Tim is essential to the functioning and productivity of the Office of Consumer Counsel (OCC). He does a great job of keeping the Division on budget, but Tim is much more than a budget analyst. He keeps excellent track of all the complex utilities' filings, pending cases, and other documents due from the OCC. He also knows many of the cases in detail and helps the Rate Analysts in their review. Tim also takes responsibility for the requirements of OCC's advisory board, the Utilities Consumer Board. Tim is key in assisting the division director with all administrative, personnel, travel, and office matters. Tim acts every day in the capacity of deputy division director, without having that title, and always performs at the highest standards of excellence in public service. Tim represents the Division in many capacities - such as on LEAN projects, the upcoming CORE transition, and handling CORA requests. He excels in customer service to the public, maintains the Division financially, keeps track of Division deadlines, and handles all the administrative requirements with the utmost professionalism.

Department of Revenue – Mia Tsuchimoto, Executive Assistant, Executive Director's Office

Mia is a model employee who demonstrates cheerful and upbeat professionalism in her daily work. While talking to a customer she focuses on resolution of stated problems. Mia works to provide efficient, effective, and elegant service to internal and external customers. When the Marijuana Division needed additional help processing applications, Mia took the lead to solicit administrative support from other divisions and volunteered to assist. Applications were processed more efficiently due to her efforts. Mia organizes and facilitates quarterly administrative meetings to provide training and build a sense of community among the administrative assistants at the DOR. Mia was able to obtain CPR defibrillators for the DOR at no cost, ensuring both the Pierce Street and Annex locations have these life saving tools available, and organized first aid training for employees. She takes pride in her work and truly provides enthusiastic support to the Executive Director's Office.

Department of Transportation – Miranda Lange, Professional Engineer, Flood Recovery

Miranda Lange has been involved with Colorado's flood recovery effort from day one, and has taken a leadership role starting with response and now through project delivery. She has been the point person for the coordination between federal and

local agencies. She has ensured that all of the necessary paperwork has been completed properly to meet federal requirements and helped local agencies with the funds they need to make their repairs. She has also been instrumental in getting all of the flood contractors educated on the necessary paperwork so they can get paid promptly. In the first few weeks of the event, Miranda worked 12 hour days, seven days a week for two months straight and has been working 60-70 hours per week consistently since. CDOT is proud to have her on our team!

Governor's Office – Will Shafroth, Director of Advance

Will Shafroth goes nearly everywhere the Governor does. His official title is Director of Advance; his unofficial title is body man to the Governor. That means he staffs the Governor at most events and meetings outside the capitol. Will works closely with the Governor and helps him move through his day. Will is proactive, anticipates the Governor's needs and regularly communicates with staff in the Governor's office about what the Governor says or needs while away from the office. Will often manages outside press inquiries, handles social media, collects constituent concerns and assists other elected officials – all with great professionalism and tact. When he's not traveling with the Governor, Will works to prepare future briefings and he helps coordinate logistics for future events. Will is – in one word – invaluable. He represents the best of Colorado and is a very important part of the team in the Governor's Office.

Office of Economic Development and International Trade – Ryan Nisogi, Marketing Technology Manager

Ryan Nisogi provides exceptional and professional digital media and marketing experience that is matched by his helpful, happy and positive demeanor. Ryan has patience of a saint and eternal willingness to take on project work despite multiple, looming deadlines and competing priorities. His expertise ranges from social media to the latest apps, current artists, marketing standards, music to web design and more. He never loses sight of being strategic and delivering strategic work product. Ryan, who has his own lovely family to whom he is devoted, is also a true family member to the office, providing critical support and services for the diverse teams, including creative, business development, film and media, and tourism. Ryan is a team player who always thinks of the greater good. Ryan is the hub of OEDIT's communication team and of the office.

Governor's Office of Information Technology – Jill Elggren, Internal Communications Manager

Jill has consistently been the “heart and soul” of OIT. While challenging dynamics in various levels of the organization may not be readily apparent, whether they are emotional or cultural Jill is often the conduit through which those concerns are heard. She constantly is in touch with the needs of our employees and she consistently delivers on the “one call does it all” promise. Jill works across all organizations to ensure that crucial communications and presentations are polished to professional perfection, and she takes very seriously her commitment to make sure all of us are offering up the most compelling communications, appearances and events-- to our employees, the community and our agency partners. For her many years of devotion to OIT's success, we thank Jill Elggren for her good work and commitment to excellence.
